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A PLEA FOR THE RETENTION OF THE OLD COUNTIES IN RECORDING. — The Watson-Praeger county and vice-county system of faunistic recording has proved itself a valuable instrument for most purposes, where smaller divisions may not be required. Among its advantages is that of being readily adaptable to earlier usage based on counties alone, in which the literature abounds; any change, therefore, which upsets this convenient harmony must, from the standpoint of recording, be considered retrograde. I am thinking here, of course, of the Local Government Act of 1972 which altered the names and boundaries of certain English and Welsh counties for administrative reasons. It seems to me that these changes do not in any way forbid the retention of the older system in published records and county lists. (Furthermore, many of us may well object on general grounds to the idea that centuries of history and ingrained tradition may legitimately be swept away overnight by a stroke of the bureaucratic pen.) The inconvenience of having to collate the two systems — even though their differences are not extensive, the chances of errors resulting, and the waste of time involved, are sufficiently obvious. Also, we should spare a thought for future workers whose task will be made onerous enough by all the nomenclatural changes, etc., over a long period, without adding to their confusion from another source. I am glad to see that in practice many recorders do in fact continue to employ the traditional and time-honoured system.

I should like in passing to put in a good word for the county and vice-county symbols, which for some reason seem almost to have dropped out of use in favour of numbers. For many, the latter are meaningless without a key; whereas, in contrast, the symbols are readily understood and memorized, to which end they were in fact devised. — A. A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, London SW7.

ACROLEPIOPSIS BETULELLA CURTIS (LEP.: YPONOMEUTIDEA) IN ARGYLLSHIRE — The only published localities for recent records of *Acrolepiopsis betulella* are Beinn Eighe NNR, Wester Ross (M. R. Young (1985) *Ent. Gaz.* 36, 298-9) and Roslin Glen LNR, Midlothian (K. P. Bland (1986) *Ent. Rec.* 98, 241-3). I have

now reared the species from seedheads of wild garlic (*Allium ursinum*) collected on 23.vii.1987 in the gorge of the Allt Cruiniche on Beinn Cruachan, Argyllshire (O. S. Grid Ref. NN0329;v.c.98). The first imago emerged on 20.viii.1987. This species should be looked for wherever its food-plant is well established. K. P. BLAND, 35 Charterhall Road, Edinburgh EH9 3HS.

NOTES ON BREEDING SABRA HARPAGULA ESP., THE SCARCE HOOK-TIP (LEP.: DREPANIDAE) — on 10.vii.1987 Colin Penney and I were fortunate in attracting a female of this local moth to m.v. light in a west country locality. The female was confined to a laying cage improvised from an half-gallon ice-cream container filled with dry earth and containing a pot of wet soil in which fresh sprigs of foodplant (*Tilia cordata*, the small-leaved lime) and bramble (for nectar) were placed. The whole was enclosed in netting, supported on a wire frame.

The moth remained alive for 12 days, laying a total of 45 ribbed, spherical eggs, five on the edges of lime leaves, the remainder on the netting. The eggs, on small pieces of substrate, were sleeved onto a growing *Tilia cordata*; growing leaves were loosely wrapped round the eggs, to help newly hatched larvae to start feeding. The first of these hatched on 24.vii.1987 but only five larvae were found on later examination. These were left sleeved on foodplant for four weeks, by which time they had grown to around 8mm long. Four were left in the sleeve, and the fifth was brought indoors, becoming fully grown towards the end of September, pupating on 28.ix.1987. The mature larva was 14mm long, head light-brown, thoracic segments chocolate-brown, saddle and rear dorsal pale ochreous-brown. The larva sits on the leaf with head and rear segments raised. Larvae kept out of doors in a sleeve pupated between 6 and 16.x.1987.

The mature larva eats every part of the leaf on which it is sitting, even if fresh foliage is close by. The larva moves infrequently, spinning a silk pad on completion of every change in position. At the end of the growth period, the larva spins a thin, but tough cocoon within a growing leaf, pupating three to four days later. The pupa is pinky-brown in colour, dusted with powder. Presumably this is the natural pupation site, with the leaf falling to the ground in the autumn.

This species appears to be difficult to rear, and there are few accounts in the literature (for example, Buckler, W. (1888) *The larvae of British butterflies and moths* III, 66-72; Griffiths, G. C. (1899) *Ent. Rec.* 11: 282-283).

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